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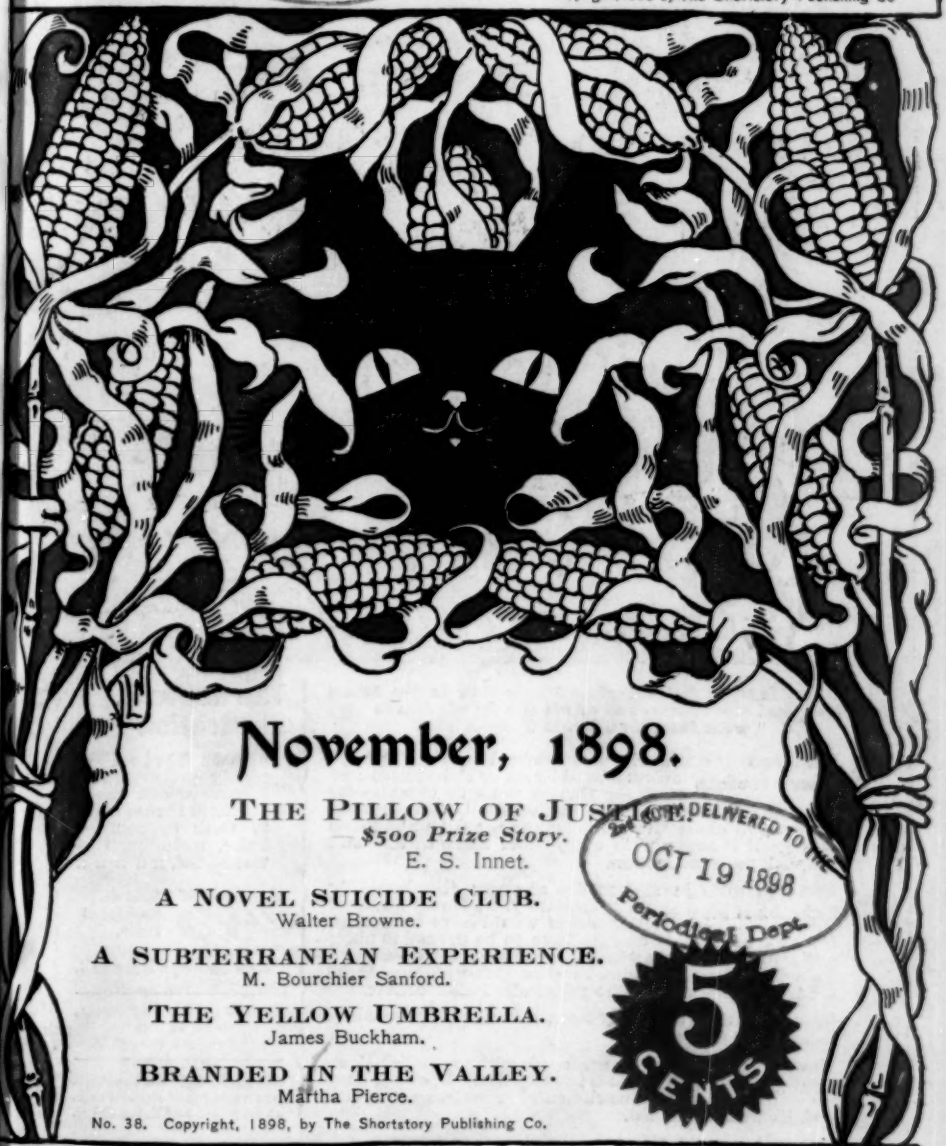

November, 1898.

THE PILLOW OF JUSTICE.
$500 Prize Story.
E. S. Innet.

A NOVEL SUICIDE CLUB.
Walter Browne.

A SUBTERRANEAN EXPERIENCE.
M. Bourchier Sanford.

THE YELLOW UMBRELLA.
James Buckham.

BRANDED IN THE VALLEY.
Martha Pierce.

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The Pillow of Justice.*

BY E. S. INNET.

STEPHEN ROGERS was riding through a jungle in Ceylon, meditating upon the vanity of human wishes when concerned with coffee planting. He had sent his coolie on ahead with his kit, with orders to await him at the next Government Rest-house, which was not far distant, so the fact that it was raining tropical torrents did not in the least disturb him. With an immediate change of raiment in prospect the rain was a godsend, for it banished the myriads of insects which ordinarily make life in the jungle a burden.

Rogers was attired in regular plantation garb, thin white clothing and the planter's double hat. On reaching the Rest-house he dismounted and shouted for his coolie. The latter did not appear but the man in charge did, and to him Rogers committed the care of his horse and entered, riding whip in hand. He meant to use it when he found the delinquent native, but that worthy was nowhere to be seen, and the keeper, returning from putting up the horse, said no such person had arrived there that night.

Rogers exhausted his vocabulary, which was varied and expressive, in voicing his opinion of the coolie, the climate, the country,

*This is one of two stories that won the $500 prize in the competition ending March 31, 1898.

and coffee planting. Having thus relieved his mind, he turned on the keeper, now reduced to a state of tremulous humility, and demanded clothes. "Sahib clothes" the man had not, but there were certain rags — if the Sahib would deign? The Sahib would, for he knew the peril of letting his clothing dry on his back, so presently he was arrayed in a new and gaudy dress, consisting of a sort of kilt, a coarse white shirt and a species of jacket embroidered in various colors. Being a large man and the Rest-house keeper small even for a native, the young planter was not unaware that he looked supremely ridiculous as he strode into the big eating room.

He had scarcely been served when a door leading into one of the little rooms opened, and a lady entered and seated herself at the same table. She was not Indian, not European, but of that degree known as Eurasian, and Rogers, when he came to himself sufficiently to be observant, saw that she was strikingly beautiful. Now, despite the rough and ready life he had been leading, he was a gentleman at heart, and it horrified him to think she must have heard his remarks in regard to the coolie.

"Thank you," said the young woman in English, as he awkwardly passed her something.

Rogers colored under his bronze skin and became acutely conscious of the five or six inches of muscular arm which showed beyond the abbreviated sleeves of his jacket. But his companion's self-poise was perfect, and he was soon chatting with her quite at his ease. It seemed that she was waiting for her escort, which had been delayed.

The young planter naturally regarded her with some curiosity. She was of queenly stature, and was gowned in soft draperies of spun silk of many colors, in which crimson predominated. The bodice was gracefully swathed about her form and caught upon the shoulder and at the breast and waist by curiously shaped dragons of yellow gold set with fine rubies. It was impossible to guess her age. A strange perfume hung about her, diffusing itself with every movement. Unlike anything he had ever experienced before, it yet had a slight similarity to the odor of the Champak flower; it was subtile, fresh, and indescribably soothing.

After the repast the Rest-house keeper announced that the

Sahib's clothes were dry, and Rogers retired. When he reappeared half an hour later, attired in his own garments and feeling much more at his ease, he found the young woman still sitting in the big eating room. She did not seem averse to continuing the conversation, looking approvingly at the young man, who was, indeed, a fine-looking fellow, with plenty of those two qualities so admired by women — self-reliance and strength. She asked him many questions; he remembered afterward that they all related to English modes of governing, and regulations regarding mines.

They were thus mutually entertained when suddenly there came a horrible cry, a cry choked in the gurgle of blood. Ghastly and unnatural as it was, they yet recognized it as the voice of the Rest-house keeper.

Rogers was a man trained to action and emergencies. The cry had not died upon the shuddering air before he had thrust the woman into one of the little rooms, caught the table and dragged it after him, put his back against the door, the table before him, and prepared to defend himself and her. These precautions only took seconds, but ere they were completed the entrance was thronged with evil brown faces and hands brandishing native swords and daggers. Rogers had his revolver going before they had well seen him, and it checked the first impetus of their attack, but he knew he could not hold them long, for though they evidently had no guns, one determined rush would overwhelm him. It was a brief fight, for while his shots told, his assailants were many. The rush came. He fired his last shot full into the breast of the nearest man, who fell across the table, caught the dying wretch's sword out of his hand, his dagger out of his sash, gave a shout — and they were upon him. He cut, and slashed, and thrust, with his back to the door and his face ever to the foe; he was wounded in a dozen places, despairing courage flamed in his eyes. The odds made hope vain, but the lust of battle was on him, and behind him, sheltered only by his courage, a defenseless woman trembled.

The scene swam before his eyes in a crimson haze. He felt a needle-like pain in his sword arm, and perceived the ring of his blade on the floor as it fell from his nerveless hand. Something red hot seemed to pierce his throat, and he knew he was done.

He choked and went down with a last consciousness of a terrible crash, before which his assailants vanished. "This is death," he thought. And then there was a calm.

. . . . . .

Rogers's coolie was the first on the scene. He stayed only to discover that his master was alive, then mounted his horse and rode away for help. In the outer room they found the Rest-house keeper stabbed through the jugular vein with a dagger.

The room where the young man lay was like a shamble. There were ten dead men there, hardly one of whom was not slashed and cut. He had made a good fight, the surgeon said grimly, and hoped to be able to pull him through, though his sword arm was terribly cut at the elbow joint, in such a fashion that although he could afterward use it well, it was never quite straight again, and his shoulder was pierced by a vicious blow evidently aimed at the throat. He also had a deep cut on the head and twenty or more lesser wounds. He was months in recovering, lying for weeks in delirium, fighting the battle over again, tormented always by one malignant face which seemed to have been fixed upon his retina when he fell, and which was imaged upon his poor, disordered brain in fantastic visions.

When he came to himself he said nothing about the woman. He was vaguely afraid of doing her harm, as he fancied her presence there might have been a secret she would wish preserved. The facts of the fight indicated simply that ill-disposed natives had attacked the Rest-house and had been in turn attacked and shot through the door from behind. This explained the crash Rogers had heard as he fell, and the vanishing of his assailants, who had been swept down by bullets as growing grain is leveled by hail. In his own mind he was convinced that the men who had so opportunely arrived were the lady's escort, and this gave him hope that she had escaped.

By the time he was up and about his coffee plantation was a thing of the past. It was the beginning of the fungoid disease which ruined the Ceylon coffee planters, and he was among the first to feel its effects. He was a true citizen of the world, however, and lost no time in repining, but shook the dust of Ceylon from his feet and went tea-planting in Japan.

He took little from Ceylon with him, but one article in his scanty luggage was strangely out of keeping with the rest of his utilitarian outfit. This was a gorgeous silken pillow embroidered in pure gold thread, and emitting a faint, delicate perfume, the same odor, vaguely suggestive of the Champak flower, which had distinguished the mysterious woman at the Rest-house. It had been found in one of the chambers, and those who cared for him concluded it was his, — some souvenir that he was sending home, — so they put it among his belongings. Rogers appropriated it, feeling he had the best right to it.

It was embroidered with the winged dragons which had clasped the woman's robe, and had an outer cover with the same symbol upon it.

By the time he got to Japan the pillow had imparted its strange perfume to all the clothing in the trunk. People remarked upon it, and ladies begged to be told its name. He developed a certain innocent conceit over it, such as he felt about his cat's-eye ring and the thin, hand-spun silk shirts he always wore; but as these were his only bachelor vanities, they were, perhaps, excusable in such a gallant, big-souled fellow. He grew tea in Japan and made more money out of the curiosities he sent to London auctioneers than he did out of his plantations. He grew raisins in California, and was ruined because an expected import duty on the Spanish product was not put on. He grew coffee in Mexico and the Fiji Islands, and finally landed back in Ceylon, this time to raise tea, for the soil, which is too poor to grow healthy coffee trees, produces first-class tea, and tea is rapidly rehabilitating Ceylon.

During all his peregrinations he still retained the memory of the mysterious woman of the Rest-house. She was his standard of beauty, by which he judged all other women and found them wanting; and he carefully cherished the embroidered pillow, which, gorgeous enough for a queen's boudoir, he always kept safely in its outer cover. At times, too, he was haunted in his dreams by the malignant face which had so tormented him in his delirium after the fight.

He had a partner in his new tea venture, a young man named Paxton, to whom he had taken a strong fancy. One night as

they sat smoking and drinking rickys, Rogers, being in an expansive mood, related the story of the battle more fully than he had ever done before.

Paxton was intensely interested. "By Jove!" he said, "did you never hear about the fabulous ruby mine and the beautiful white woman who governs the tribe that owns it?"

"No," said Rogers. "Fire away."

"Why, that's all. They say there's a ruby mine up in the hills somewhere, and that the men who work it are ruled by a woman of remarkable beauty and wealth. Their religion and government are different from those of the other tribes, and they are tremendously rich. You never can tell, of course, when the natives are lying and when they're not, but I've heard great yarning over it in the Bazars. When any of the dealers got hold of a fine ruby there was always gossip over it. I was told that the 'white woman' is really an Eurasian, the daughter of an Indian princess and a Certain Somebody very high up in the government. Anyhow, they say this woman pays the taxes for the whole tribe and brings them down herself, so that the collector never goes near their settlement. I've heard all kind of yarns; that she comes dressed like a princess, disguised as a pauper, alone, with a queenly retinue, and, in fact, there is no conjecture too wild to tack onto the ruby mine in the hills. But, mind you, I wouldn't wonder if there was some truth in it."

Rogers puffed reflectively at his pipe. "It was just about tribute time when I saw the woman at the Rest-house," he said. "I remember I had been considerably worried over the tax question that year."

"Really!" exclaimed Paxton, who had spent all his life in India and Ceylon, and knew enough to treat seriously what newcomers are wont to scoff at. "Well, there's more truth than fable in some of these Indian tales. Wouldn't it be great if the mysterious woman of the Rest-house and the queen of the ruby settlement were one and the same?"

"I could do nicely with a ruby mine," said the young planter reflectively. "And she was a fine woman."

"'The price of a virtuous woman is above rubies,'" quoted his partner chaffingly, "but personally I prefer the rubies."

"Just wait a bit," said Rogers oracularly. "You'll fall head over heels in love some day. As for me, I'd be jolly well satisfied with the 'white woman' without the ruby mine."

"Swallow your own pills!" laughed Paxton. "But suppose there is some truth in the ruby mine business? Let's make inquiries." And they did.

At length, by means of bribes, questions, and conjectures, they pieced out a half-believable story about an isolated hill tribe, over which a woman ruled and which was reputedly very wealthy. But the hillsmen were fierce, there were wild beasts in the jungle, and the supine natives of the lower levels had enough to eat without much exertion. What strange creatures were Sahibs who exerted themselves so unnecessarily! Yet if the Sahibs wanted a guide, surely the whole district would question his brother or his friend and spread the news abroad, that one might be found. Was it the will of God to keep the Sahibs on the plantations to exact so many hours' work a day when they themselves desired to be looking for a "lost feather" many days' journey hence? No, assuredly not! The bread-fruit was ripe. Its odor filled the air. They had but to pluck and eat. A sickness had taken the coffee plants; what more likely than that it should take the tea? So if the Sahibs complained, why, who can fight against the Evil One who spoiled the coffee? Besides, that was away in the future; meantime the Sahibs clamored to be gone. Finally a man was found in a neighboring village who said he could guide the Sahibs to the hidden kingdom in the heart of the mountains. But he sent word by the go-between that the passes leading to the isolated community were guarded and the country dangerous. He could not guarantee the safety of the Sahibs.

The Sahibs sent a message to say that they were going on a friendly mission, not for plunder, and therefore expected to pass unchallenged. To this the guide sent back word that the lonely tribe spoke a different tongue from the plains people, and might not understand. The Sahibs replied that they would look after their own safety, and that what they needed was a guide, not a guard. Apropos of this, however, Paxton suggested that they take the perfumed pillow along, as the winged dragons upon it might be an insignia of the woman's royalty, and that in the

event of their language proving unintelligible it would serve as a sort of passport. So they packed it up with the rest of their kit; it went into little bulk and added practically nothing to the weight.

So one morning the two set forth to "seek a lost feather," as the natives said, meeting their guide at a Rest-house some twenty miles away. The moment Rogers saw him he had a sense of familiarity, and was also conscious of a feeling of repulsion.

The man was in no particular respect unprepossessing. His eyes were shifty and his mouth a little cruel, but these expressions are not unusual in natives. His most noticeable peculiarity, however, was his nostrils, which were wide and flexible, like those of an animal. Rogers looked at his partner to judge of the impression their guide had made upon him. Paxton said nothing till the man had left the room, then he declared himself. "So that's Doonga! Well, I could eat all of him I like!"

Rogers felt oppressed at hearing his own inexplicable prejudice put into words, but he laughed and said: —

"Oh, well, 'in for a penny, in for a pound.' I don't doubt he'll bear watching; but Lord! most of them will. If my gentleman tries any tricks there will be one more in Nirvana in short order."

They stayed that night at the Rest-house, and set forth the next morning, their guide maintaining an attitude of respectful humility. Their next stage took them to the next Rest-house, where their horses were left. Here their packs were made up into three, and they struck off through the jungle, where they journeyed three days without notable adventure. Upon the third day, the way being very arduous, their guide, with much submission, asked if he should carry their guns. He was well used to such journeyings, he said, and the Sahibs were not.

"No," said Rogers sardonically, "you need not take the guns, but since you are able, you can take an extra pack."

For the next few hours, till sundown, Doonga toiled on with his double burden. He found abundant reason for pitching camp early, and Rogers, who was good-natured, had not the heart to prolong the march.

"He won't be so quick offering to take the guns another time," he said to Paxton. "I'm keeping tabs on him. Did you hear him singing this morning?"

"I heard him *yowling!*"

"Well, it's all the same thing, only he was chanting, 'Follow, follow, follow, we go — we go — to the land of precious stones!' He thought I didn't know the lingo, and when I asked him what he was making such a row for, he said it was a prayer-song, and very holy. It didn't sound very sanctified to me, it sounded more like a tip to some one."

"Jove!"

"Yes, I think we are probably being followed by some of Doonga's pals, so after this we won't both sleep at once. We'll take turns at watching; not a sentry go, you understand, just a still watch."

This they did. In the small hours of the morning Paxton, who was on guard, saw Doonga leave his mat and disappear in the jungle, and immediately awakened Rogers. In an hour the guide reappeared and approached the two men stealthily, and as they were both seemingly asleep, he beckoned toward the jungle, from which crept a man, who waited at a little distance. Doonga bent silently over the packs, drew out something from them, and going to his companion, seemed to exhibit it, after which he brought it back. As he returned, a glint of moonlight shone upon the broideries of the perfumed pillow.

The stranger disappeared in the jungle, and the guide, having replaced the pillow, went placidly to sleep.

Next morning Rogers asked Doonga how far they were from the mountain pass which led into the hidden valley. One day's journey, he said; by the next day, at noon, they would arrive. That day the traveling was terrible, the pathless jungle seeming more impenetrable, more impassable than ever. Early in the afternoon Paxton tripped over a peculiarly twisted creeper and came down full length, landing in a nest of ground-partridge eggs, which bedaubed him finely. He said evil words under his breath, and Rogers could hardly keep his face straight. They toiled on for two hours, Indian file, after the guide, then Rogers plucked his comrade by the sleeve, pointing to where, near a grotesquely gnarled creeper, there was a nestful of broken eggs. The guide was leading them in a circle, probably giving time for his confederates to come up with them.

A very ugly look came into the young planter's eyes. "Collar Doonga," he said briefly, "and hold him."

Paxton obeyed with alacrity, the native starting nervously as he felt a vigorous hand close upon his arm. Rogers tightened his belt, took the knapsack from his shoulders and began to climb a tall, slender tree. He went up slowly, but presently was well above the lesser growths, and when he got among the higher branches he saw the hills for which they were aiming, a few hours' journey away. They must try to reach them at all costs that night, for whatever welcome awaited them there was safer than to trust to the hospitality of the jungle with Doonga's friends as hosts. He descended, explained briefly to Paxton, and then they struck out at right angles through the jungle, fixing their path from point to point by aid of trees and holding an unswervingly straight course, while they kept Doonga between them, telling him now and then what they thought of him. Night was falling when the jungle began to grow less dense. They were nearing the plain at the foot of the hills.

"Hurry, you black hound!" said Rogers to his captive, who was doing everything possible to retard their progress, and who now set up piercing cries for mercy. His captor whipped out his revolver, and the shrieks subsided.

"Well, he has effectually warned his pals," he remarked. "I don't know what holds my hand that I don't put a bullet through him."

"A prejudice against cold blood," replied Paxton. "It's a great hamper to decent men."

At that moment from all around them came the melancholy cries of the moonbird. The two travelers paled slightly, and looked at each other. The cry of the moonbird is the signal of a murderous society after the order of Thugs, only they stab their victims through the throat instead of strangling them, and this fact was well known to both men.

A malignant spark glowed in the eyes of the guide, an evil pride shone balefully upon his countenance, while his nostrils dilated like those of a beast of prey when he scents blood. At that moment a recollection came to Rogers that almost unnerved him. He knew now why Doonga looked so familiar. This was

the malignant face which had so long haunted his dreams, and which had tormented him in his delirium after the Rest-house battle.

They hastened on, Rogers clutching Doonga with one hand and his revolver with the other, knowing by a rustle now and then in the underbrush that they had an unseen malevolent escort.

When at length they reached the little strip of plain some two miles broad it was too dark to see clearly, but the mountain facing them seemed to be cleft in two. They knew that if they attempted to cross that plain the assassins would surround them and rush them into the open, and that a stand for the night must be made. A tree stood at some little distance from the last fringe of underbrush, and here they decided to camp. One of them guarded Doonga and watched the jungle while the other made preparations for the night, which were simple, as they did not propose to erect the little tent; and in place of the usual evening meal they took a light lunch standing. They then bound Doonga hand and foot, and removed his weapons, which consisted of a dagger of peculiar shape, and a revolver marked with Rogers's name — the same which he had hurled into the faces of the ruffians at the Rest-house. When these were taken from him the guide set up a howl. Rogers, standing on guard beside the packs, caught up the perfumed pillow and threw it over to his partner.

"Clap that on his ugly face," he said, "and keep it there till he shuts up."

Paxton caught it. As the native realized his purpose fear crept over his face, distorting his features, and he uttered an involuntary scream. In an instant his voice was stifled by the pressure of the perfumed pillow. At first he struggled violently, then his muscles relaxed, when the pillow was instantly removed. Doonga lay smiling up, his face strangely livid in the light of the tiny fire.

"Lord!" said Paxton. "I hope I haven't smothered him."

"Small odds," replied Rogers, "only it's been too quick. Something slow is what he needs."

He broke off suddenly, for Doonga was beginning to talk in a low, dreamy voice. Paxton leaned over to listen.

"He's gabbling all sorts of things," he said, "about a 'pillow of justice' and so on. Whatever is the matter with him?"

"Watch out," said Rogers; "he's up to some deviltry, you may be sure."

"Only the good rest well upon the pillow of justice," said Doonga distinctly.

"Well, that lets you out," said Paxton. "You're not one of the holy, are you?"

"I am of the Sacred Seventh Circle of the Slayers," replied the guide.

Paxton shuddered. "I say," he said, "are they —"

"Yes," said Rogers, "they are the beauties who stab through the throat; Thugs, simply, with another method. That devil's in a trance, though goodness only knows what threw him into it. Maybe he'll answer questions. Come here and keep guard, and let me have a try with him. There are two men in the shadow of that clump of mimosas," he added. "Just keep a bead on them. It won't harm if you bag one." Then he said, addressing the guide: "Doonga! Where is the road to the hidden valley?"

"Between the two white rocks," said the native promptly.

"Is it guarded?"

"Yes."

"By whom?"

"By those who kill strangers."

"At whose command?"

"It is the law."

"Whose law?"

"The law of the hidden valley."

"How may we enter?"

"By showing the winged dragon."

"Why did you come hither?"

"To gain entrance with my friends to the hidden valley."

"How?"

"By aid of the pillow of justice."

"What is the pillow of justice?"

"It is a charm which makes the dumb speak, it is the possession of the rulers of the hidden valley. It was left by the Queen in a Rest-house, and taken away over seas by a devil Sahib. But our soothsayers said he would return again with it, and so we believed and waited till he came, and lo! he is in the hands of my brothers. He goes about perfumed with the sacred scent of hidden kings, but I, Doonga, have delivered him into the hands of the slayers."

At that instant Paxton fired. "Bagged him!" he exclaimed.

"Good!" said Rogers laconically. "Where are the White Rocks?" he asked Doonga. The native was silent. "Doonga!" he called sharply, "where are the White Rocks?"

"Here, near at hand, straight as the bird flies." His voice died away to a whisper, nor could he be aroused to further speech.

Rogers left him and went to his friend. A dozen flitting figures hovered in the shadow of the mimosas. "Paxton," he whispered, "you heard what he said. We are in a desperate strait, and must resort to a desperate expedient to get out of it. I am sure what the beggar said was true. I want you to crawl away through the grass and try to get to the sentries at the foot of the mountain. Take the pillow with you, and use it for all it is worth. Try to get them to come and help me, and if they won't, get access to the Queen. She will help me on the double quick. You must see that it's our only chance. They'll rush us after a bit, and you know what that means!"

"But, Rogers —"

"Go!" was the answer; and Paxton suddenly felt very young and weak before the force of this man's character. "You'll have to crawl a long way through the grass, so you'd better tie the pillow on your back."

Paxton did so. It was now so dark that these preparations could not be seen by their enemies, but this advantage was offset by the fact that the movements of those in ambush were equally invisible. The young man had barely started on his perilous mission when he turned back for an instant.

"Rogers, old man!" His voice was thick; their hands found each other in the dark.

"Be off!" said Rogers, authoritatively but gently. "And if they do me up — tell Her what I thought of her."

"You shall tell her yourself," replied Paxton stoutly, and set forth once more.

His journey seemed long. He crawled painfully forward, and when some hundreds of yards from the camp was startled by the sound of breathing close beside him. He paused and held his breath; then, loud and clear, came the call of a moonbird, which was answered by some one upon the other side. He knew then

they were surrounding Rogers, and that he must be through the circle. He rose and ran as he had never run before, and his breath was like flame in his throat. At length he saw a faint glimmer of light, and rushed headlong toward it, when suddenly he was brought to a halt.

"Who goes? Stand and speak!"

"The pillow of justice," he gasped, turning to a sentinel who had apparently risen from the earth, with leveled gun.

"Come," said the sentinel.

In ten minutes Paxton stood in the midst of a throng of natives, and unloosening the pillow held it out. They salaamed and fell back, and presently an old man richly clad appeared, for whom all made way. He also salaamed at sight of the pillow.

"Do you bring tidings of the battle of the Rest-house?" he asked in excellent English.

Paxton gasped. "Yes, yes!" he cried. "The man who saved the 'white lady' is out there on the plains by the peepul tree, surrounded by murderers, led by one who escaped from the Rest-house."

The old man turned to his followers, a fiery indignation in his eye. "You hear," he said. "Fly to the rescue! The peepul tree shelters the savior of the Queen."

In an instant they had all fallen into line, fully armed, a young native with a crimson headdress in command, and in three minutes they were leaping across the plain. As Paxton endeavored to follow he was restrained by the old man.

"No, pardon, Sahib, you will stay!" he said.

"But —"

"He will be saved if it be the will of God to save him," said the old man gravely, and led the way through a narrow portal into a street of a garrison village at the foot of the mountain. Dozens of soldiers were swarming out into the highways.

"I am glad to see thee," said the old man. "The Queen has ever said that the Sahib would return bringing the precious pillow of justice, and for these years past I have abode at the foot of the mountain ready to give a fitting welcome. It has been weary waiting. I shall be glad to get back to the mountain."

In an hour the rescuers returned with Rogers. The two friends wrung each other's hands. "They had me tree'd," said the young planter. "They were just surrounding me when you left. They hadn't any guns, you know, so I shinned up the tree and popped away at them Doonga didn't have a very good time of it when the rescuers arrived. I didn't look any more than I could help. It was horrible!"

"Served him right," said Paxton, who hadn't seen the wretch's death and could not comprehend the horror of it.

. . . . . .

It is many years now since the two travelers were carried triumphantly up the long defile which gives entrance to the hidden valley; many years since Rogers's eager eyes searched a woman's face for a sign and found in her sweet eyes the promise of perfect happiness; many years since he was told the properties of the pillow of justice, upon which no person could lay his head and withhold the truth, but must needs answer every question asked, even to the secrets of his soul, so strange and subtile was the perfume prepared by the ancestress of the Queen, a perfume sacred to the rulers of the hidden valley.

The wealth of the valley was no fable. Its people were contented and happy, and glad to receive Rogers as co-ruler with their queen, in whose veins flowed the best blood of Ceylon and England. He found it easy to secure the claims of his wife and her people, and their possessions are now duly attested.

Paxton remained with them for a long time, but there was no beautiful queen to complete his paradise, so after a bit he wandered afield to England, Holland, and America, seeking markets for the gems. Upon one of these journeys he met his fate, and a very gay couple they are; the rubies worn by the young wife are the envy of every one.

Far away in the East Rogers rules a little kingdom wisely and well. There is no shadow of inequity in his realm, for judgments are given solely upon testimony elicited by the subtile magic of the pillow of justice. But even its enchantment cannot find one thought of distrust or unhappiness in the hearts of Rogers and his beautiful wife.

A Novel Suicide Club.

BY WALTER BROWNE.

THE following extraordinary advertisement appeared in a London paper one day last summer. It was in an obscure corner and hardly likely to attract wide-spread notice, yet its weird invitation to suicide did not escape the eagle eye of my chief at Scotland Yard, at which famous establishment I was then employed: —

WHO WILL DIE WITH ME TO-NIGHT?

I am tired of a solitary life and can bear it no longer. I have neither family nor friends, and I seek others similarly situated who will join me in a plan to end our lives together in comfort. Meet me in the South Kensington Museum at six o'clock, and wear a badge of crape upon your arms. I will wear a similar badge.

X. Y. Z.

I was ordered to investigate and, if possible, to prevent the formation of such a Suicide Club as seemed to be projected, the methods of which were to be so sweeping and so sudden.

Although armed with a warrant for the arrest of "John Doe, others implicated, etc.," I was especially warned not to make any arrests until I was fully satisfied as to which of those who wore the badge of death, if more than one should appear, was the author of the advertisement and the founder of the new Suicide Club. I was further instructed not to act until I was sure that the crucial time had arrived and that the strange body of cranks were about to execute their compact to die together.

It was with mingled feelings of amusement and awe that I examined my revolver before starting out on my strange adventure. I was totally unaware of the number of desperate mortals I might be called upon to encounter, but when I reflected upon the folly of attempting to make them desist from their deadly purpose at the point of my pistol, the absurdity of the situation made me smile. There was a suggestion of ghastly humor in the idea of

covering a man with a revolver and bidding him, in the name of the law, desist from committing the crime of self-slaughter.

South Kensington Museum is by no means a well-defined trysting place, and as I wandered through its many spacious galleries I feared lest I should fail altogether to encounter the blood-thirsty X. Y. Z., who had not only determined that he himself would die that night, but who sought to obtain traveling companions to that bourne whence no traveler returns.

I felt much oppressed with the weight of responsibility placed upon me. I was to save the life of one, perhaps of more than one fellow-creature; to rescue more than one soul from eternal damnation; and incidentally to arrest possibly a crowd of cranks who cared so little for human life that they were prepared to take even their own at practically a moment's notice. I endured an almost unbearable tension of fear and apprehension lest by some sudden impulse or at some prearranged signal one or more of my fellow-creatures should hurl themselves into eternity before my eyes, through my delaying action the fraction of a moment too long.

I had strolled into the Mummy Room, fancifully imagining that it might be an appropriate place for such a meeting as I had come to witness, and was leaning against a case containing the shriveled remains of what was once an Egyptian king, with all the hopes, passions, and ambitions of a powerful and lusty ruler, when a bright-eyed, handsome athletic young fellow sauntered past. I scarcely heeded the eager glance with which he scanned me, for at the moment I did not in the least associate that muscular and healthy specimen of humanity with the presumedly morbid creature who had signed himself "X. Y. Z."

My attention, indeed, was wholly absorbed by a young and extremely pretty girl, who at the same moment was approaching from the other end of the gallery. She bore an unmistakable business air, which, however, did not conceal certain restless symptoms of timidity.

As the handsome young couple passed each other, they started violently, and exchanged a glance of obvious recognition, though they neither spoke nor stopped. It was that which caused me to watch them more closely. The man wore a somewhat threadbare,

though well-fitting suit of clothes, and a feeling of horror mingled with my sense of professional satisfaction as I saw upon his left sleeve a broad band of black crape. The girl was quietly and tastefully clad in a gown of some dark material, and as she passed me I saw upon the right sleeve of that fair bud of womanhood a similar band of black.

The young girl had evidently noticed the badge of death upon the man's arm, for after walking a few steps beyond me in a hesitating manner, she stopped and, with her pretty face crimson with blushes, she turned and looked back at him. He also had turned and stood with his hand at his chin in an attitude of indecision. In this position each looked long and curiously at the other, whom they reciprocally supposed had given the invitation to join in a double suicide.

Pity mingled with admiration seemed to beam from the eyes of the man as he looked at the splendid young creature to whom life, apparently, had so soon become unbearable. Presently, raising his hat with great courtesy, he approached the damsel, who stood expectantly with downcast eyes in evident embarrassment within a few yards of me.

"I am surprised to see you here, Miss Fligh," he began, with some embarrassment.

"I don't see why, Jack," she replied, with a little lingering emphasis on the name.

He flushed with pleasure and said eagerly, taking her hand, "Then it's all forgiven, Nelly?"

"Of course, you foolish boy," she answered. "Why were you so stupid?"

He was about to clear up this point, doubtless, when suddenly his face fell and he said gloomily, touching the band of crape on her arm, "This means business, I suppose."

Her expression instantly reflected his, and she said sadly, "You, too — I had hoped to be alone in this."

He laughed bitterly, and turning with one accord, this sane and healthy pair, who, according to the terms of the advertisement, were soon to die together, walked slowly down the gallery side by side.

It was clear that neither of them was X. Y. Z. That they

were previously acquainted was equally clear. The unmistakable glance of recognition which they had exchanged when they first met had prepared me for the intimate character of the conversation which I had overheard, and which gave an ample clue to the situation. It was evident enough to me. Two lovers, separated by some inexorable reason, probably money or the lack of it, had independently resolved upon making a life which could not be happy as brief as possible. All this I thought out as I strolled along the gallery after them.

As I came nearer to them their talk was again audible to me. Not another word of the unpleasant object of their meeting was spoken by either, however. By a sort of tacit understanding each appeared to avoid the subject of the advertisement, and their conversation consisted exclusively of the usual allusions to the weather. Once when the man thoughtlessly remarked that it would probably be warmer on the morrow, the girl seemed to shrink from him and shiver slightly. And then the pair who had been brought together under such extraordinary circumstances uttered a laugh which had more of pain than pleasure in it, and lapsing into silence, strolled out of the gallery.

As they approached the restaurant at the entrance of the Museum, the young man said to his beautiful companion, who was soon to be his partner in death: —

"Shall we not take a little refreshment, — first?"

The word "first" seemed to stick in his throat.

With a smile of reviving happiness the little maid cried, as it seemed to me, almost joyfully: —

"Oh, yes! I would much rather take a little refreshment," and she, too, had to gulp something down as she added the word "first."

They took a table just inside the entrance, and I secured a seat sufficiently near to overhear some of their conversation. They ordered brandy and sodas. So did I. They evidently felt that they needed bracing for the work before them. So did I. Presently they ordered more stimulants, and I began to wonder if the curse of drink was the cause of their being tired of life.

It would have been a merry feast if the skeleton of that horrible advertisement had not sat in the vacant chair and chilled

that bright young couple to their very marrow. I flattered myself that I was a close student of character, and though I caught but few of their whispered words, I did not fail to read the feelings of that pair rightly.

In spite of the skeleton it was quite clear that the young man was very much in love with the strangely pretty creature who was to woo death with him, while the dainty little damsel was entirely unable to disguise the fact that this man who was seeking to die in her company was dearer to her than life. As I watched their ardent glances and noted their complete absorption in one another, a hope sprang up in me. They had had a little quarrel, I remembered, since there had been a talk of forgiveness. Might not their present ghastly purpose have been the result of this misunderstanding, and might not this misunderstanding be removed in time — before the arrival of the fateful X. Y. Z.?

Inwardly I rejoiced that my mission promised to have such a pleasant termination, but my satisfaction and self-congratulation were premature and misplaced.

At the moment when I felt that their eyes were speaking the preliminaries to an appeal to live and love, as their lips were tremulously framing the words "live for me, and I will live for you," a tall, gaunt stranger stopped suddenly just outside the restaurant and gazed long and earnestly at the badges of crape upon the arms of each of the young people. I immediately noticed that he, too, wore the fatal badge of the new Suicide Club, and recognized him at once as the arch conspirator, X. Y. Z.

If any doubt had existed it would have been at once dispelled by the man crying out in a loud voice: —

"Are you the young folks who answered my advertisement? I'm X. Y. Z. Glad to meet you. I've been looking all over the place, but little expected to find my friends of the black band in the restaurant. Never mind. A nip of brandy will put you in good shape for what is to come. Everything is ready and waiting. My carriage is outside. Let's jump in and get along."

All this before the startled pair could speak a word.

This was surely the recklessness of insanity. No one but a madman would have spoken of such a hideous project as he had in hand in the hearing of a crowd of people so loudly and so

freely. I realized that I had yet a difficult and possibly a dangerous task on hand.

Still, I was almost sure that I could count upon the coöperation of the young man, who had found a new motive for life in his love for the romantic girl, the current of whose morbid folly he had stemmed.

What was my dismay, then, to see the young people instantly change and show the greatest eagerness to fulfil to the limit their appointment with X. Y. Z.! It seemed as if the stern old man had suddenly obtained hypnotic influence over that athletic young fellow and that fair, frail girl. Before his arrival they had seemed all gentleness and tenderness. Now each seemed as if on stern business bent. They announced their readiness to accompany X. Y. Z. to his home and at least listen to the details of his scheme.

I knew that the proper moment to make my arrests had not yet arrived; and above all, I wanted to see the home of the founder of the Suicide Club, and to learn the means by which he proposed that these two young people should die with him. It was therefore necessary for me to accompany them in the carriage. I had provided for such an emergency as this, and unobserved I slipped a band of crape around my arm. Then I announced myself as anxious to be of the party.

The young people started suspiciously, but X. Y. Z. greeted me cordially. He laughed loud and boisterously, shouting: —

"Bravo! The more, the merrier!"

At this the young girl shuddered slightly, and seemed about to falter. For a moment her courage appeared about to leave her, and she clung to the arm of the younger man for support. Her pretty cheeks flushed, then became very pale, but she bit her lips and rallied with a determined effort. We passed out of the Museum.

That the founder of the new Suicide Club was no mean personage was proved by the splendor of the brougham and liveried coachman which awaited us outside. We were driven rapidly to a pretentious house in one of the best streets in South Kensington. On that strange journey not one word was spoken except by the voluble old man, who laughed and chuckled fiendishly,

and time after time congratulated himself upon having gathered together, as he expressed it, "such a nice little family party."

Arrived within the luxuriously furnished room on the ground floor of X. Y. Z.'s house, I was astonished to see that a banquet had been prepared, and we were cordially invited to sit down and partake.

Not one word of our supposed approaching death was spoken by our host, who seemed to be in the best of spirits; but the three of us naturally thought of nothing else, and the dinner was hideously dull. For my own part, I sent every dish away from me untasted, partly from fear that the old fiend's scheme might be to poison us unawares, and partly because I had no inclination to eat with such a distasteful and probably so dangerous a task before me.

It was a relief when the table was cleared and I still saw no symptoms of convulsions or collapse in my companions. Then it was that the old man arose and deliberately said: —

"Now I will make my proposition by which I and my friends may mutually end our lives together in comfort, according to the promise contained in my advertisement."

I fumbled in my pockets and held a pair of handcuffs ready to snap them upon the wrists of the maniac.

"I regret that I am only able to extend this offer to two of you," continued X. Y. Z., "for you, sir," — he was addressing me, — "have not fully complied with the terms. You have sat at my table, but you have not eaten with me."

A wave of happiness and thankfulness surged through me at that moment. I felt sure that my caution had saved my life. But the others! They had eaten, and I felt that there was no time to be lost. Arrests must be made, and physicians must be summoned. Stomach pumps might yet save the lives of those two sturdy young people.

"My scheme is simply this," began the old man, and I decided to wait at least long enough to hear the vile story from the madman's own lips.

"You will make as pretty a pair as ever were wed," continued the old fellow, "and I want you to keep house for me. You shall have the deeds, and my fortune when I die."

I was mystified. I gasped for breath.

"All I ask," said X. Y. Z., taking the young people kindly by the hand, "is that you let a lonely old fellow without a friend in the world, since he put the badge of a widower on his sleeve, have a lodging in the house. Above all, never let him dine alone again as long as he lives."

There was a moment's silence. Then simultaneously three newspaper clippings were produced and three voices asked in consternation: —

"Are you not the man who advertised for some one to die with him?"

"To DIE with me!" shouted X. Y. Z., in accents of horror, at the same time snatching the advertisement from my hand.

"Damn it!" he ejaculated. "The confounded printers have dropped the letter 'N' from its place. I wrote: 'WHO WILL DINE WITH ME?'"

. . . . . .

Two smart city editors of up-to-date newspapers the next day failed to print the sensational story of a new Suicide Club which they had scheduled, for Jack Brevier and Miss Nelly Fligh, each star reporters, reported it to be "a fake." Shortly afterwards those enterprising reporters sent in their resignations, and X. Y. Z. welcomed into his household an adopted son and daughter.

As for me,— I left Scotland Yard, and took to — Well, that is immaterial, anyway.

A Subterranean Experience.

BY M. BOURCHIER SANFORD

I COULD not see a ray of light; almost stifled, I gasped for breath, and a terrible weight oppressed me. When I raised my hand, it struck something which, in my bewildered condition, I thought was the ceiling of my room; but, in one awful moment later, I realized that, above, below, on either side, pinning me in a space little larger than my body, were wooden walls. Buried alive?

My past was a blank, but I was horribly conscious of the present. I tried to shriek aloud, but hardly made a sound. I pounded on the coffin lid and dashed frantically against the sides. Was I dreaming? delirious? or did my prison move with my motion? I raised myself against the lid with a desperate effort. The narrow box was lifted, and fell backward with a splash. The coffin was floating, and was water-tight.

Was I the victim of some plot? If so, why? How? No solution came. I remembered nothing. As I still breathed, though painfully, I knew that a little air must find its way to me. Could I, with all my strength, burst the lid or force out its fastenings? I pounded, pushed, worked at it, and at last, O joy! it moved. It had been fitted into grooves; and I shoved it backward until I had room to raise myself and sit up.

But I was surrounded by darkness as deep as that of my coffin. The air had the chill of an atmosphere never reached by sunlight. I stretched my arms in every direction, but could feel nothing except the water below.

Had I really died? Was this some grim river of the nether world? I made a cup of my hands, and tasted some of the water. No, surely I was in the flesh, for my parched throat was relieved.

I worked the lid out of its grooves, and, taking it with both

hands, tried to reach the water bed; but as I touched nothing, I knew the depth must be at least more than six feet. With the aid of my clumsy paddle, I moved the vessel slowly, until the bow struck something hard; then I stepped forward and touched the obstacle. It was a stone pillar.

I held it with one arm, and, lifting the other high above my head, tried to reach the top, but could not. I sat for a while in my boat motionless, with memory rushing back upon me, for that column had stirred an association.

My last conscious moment had not been passed in the night editor's room of the New York *Spectator*, as I had thought in faint glimmerings of recollection, but in my lodging house in Constantinople, to which place I had been dispatched by our paper. Was it possible that the secret society, of whose existence I had learned through a strange chain of circumstances, and of whose deeds I had discovered information of the gravest character, had determined to silence me forever by consigning me to one of those mysterious subterranean monuments, the cisterns beneath the city? But, though there are accounts of their great length, which has been stretched by the imagination from yards to miles, and legends of rash adventurers who have tried to explore their dark recesses and have never returned, they are visited by travelers, described in guide books, and their size is said to be accurately known. Therefore my case was not hopeless, and my cries might reach a friendly ear.

I shouted for help, and the echoes of my voice mocked me. I moved the coffin-boat far enough to enable me to touch several pillars, but no light cheered my eyes, no sound from other living being, my ear; and, at last, wearied and despondent, I fell asleep.

I was awakened by a piercing cry — the shriek of a woman in terror. I tried to answer, but my voice, as in a nightmare, refused utterance. I heard the tones of a man, brutal and angry, and again the appeal for help.

The echoes made me uncertain of the direction of the sound, and I could see nothing; but I called aloud, and tried to move my wretched craft toward the invisible pair; whereon the ruffian laughed jeeringly and rowed away.

"Father, is it you?" cried the woman in the Greek tongue.

"Not father," I answered with my imperfect Greek, "and I cannot see where you are; but I will aid you if it is in my power."

"I will come to you. Your voice is that of a stranger; but you are English, American, perhaps, and I trust you," she said, adding when she had brought her boat close to mine, "You have but lately arrived, or you would have learned to distinguish objects, though dimly, even in this darkness."

"But lately arrived! Is it possible that you, that others, live here — under the earth?"

"Alas, yes. And all of us, like you, have awakened in the darkness knowing nothing, But we must move quickly, or — he — may follow. As we go, tell me of yourself, how you came."

She gave me an oar, which I used as a paddle under her direction; and, as we went on, I told her briefly how, while sitting in my room, I had heard steps in the hall; how my door had been burst open, and I had been surrounded by masked men, one of whom had held a phial to my nostrils; at that point recollection had failed until I had come to consciousness in the coffin. I assured her that I was guilty of no crime, but did not confide to her my occupation or my name.

In turn she informed me that her father, cousin Markos, and herself lived with other prisoners on an artificial island in these subterranean waters. She believed that her father had been suspected of leading an intrigue in which he had taken no part; and his daughter and nephew had been regarded as accomplices. They had been in captivity for several months; three old women and some men had been confined so long that they had lost count of the time, and, through peering in the darkness, had nearly lost their sight.

"But is not this the Hall of Waters, or the Yeri Batan Serai, Underground Palace, one of the great cisterns, the entrance to which is known?"

"It is, indeed, a hall of waters, and a vast one; but its very existence is unknown, except to the wretched prisoners, and those who have carefully guarded the secret,— handing it down, we believe, from generation to generation. It has been suspected by

a few, and tales of torture and crime have been whispered furtively, not spoken openly. We do not know its entrance. Some, believing that they had discovered it, have attempted escape, but have been entrapped, and tortured before death. Resistance is useless, and death hangs over us all. Masked men come at irregular intervals; sometimes only a few days elapse between their visits, sometimes many weeks. They choose one of our number, we know not why, and take him away. Though he is aware that he is being led to an awful fate, he goes silently, without protest; for that would be unavailing. You have come to fill a place made vacant three weeks ago, when one who was dear to us was taken. Some are permitted to live long, perhaps because their captors know that the torture of suspense is more terrible than death; and, therefore, it is a sweeter vengeance. Korapha, from whom you delivered me, though a prisoner, is our keeper; and five Turks, likewise prisoners, assist him. They are armed, and we have no weapons."

The sound of voices came to us, light was reflected on the water, and presently I saw a number of persons standing about a wood fire on what appeared to be a flat-topped rock. The savory odor of frying fish was grateful to one who was faint from hunger.

"No food is supplied," explained my companion, "but there are many fish. Some are blind; others, that come in from without the walls, have sight."

The prisoners came to the rock's edge and questioned me. They were almost in rags, but all wore a rough garb similar to that in which I had found myself clad, excepting my companion, whom they called Eirene, and whose threadbare dress was that of a Greek maiden. As she stood in the glow of the fire, I saw that she was of rare beauty. The ghastly pallor, which gave to others a weird, unpleasant appearance, was in her a clear whiteness which accentuated the luster of her dark eyes, and the richness of her black hair, which hung in long braids. She reminded my questioners that I had been long without food and was shivering with cold. An old woman pointed to a seat by the fire; and another brought me fried fish on a stone plate, and a boiled vegetable substance white in color. I learned that it was a

water weed, which grew in abundance on shoals that had been formed, doubtless, since the building of the aqueduct by deposits brought by the slow current. There were several varieties of water plant, all edible, and all blanched through lack of sunlight; from one variety a sort of tea was made. The fish and weeds were the only food of the community. The former were smoked, dried, or eaten fresh, and were also made into cakes mixed with dried and pounded weeds, and fried with an oil obtained from certain varieties of fish.

In answer to my inquiry as to the wood, a man who had regarded me with much curiosity replied that it was taken from the piles on which two partition walls, which had openings for the passage of water, had rested. These partitions, which were built of smaller stone than the massive outer walls, had crumbled, and some of the stones had been used in the construction of this island — which measured about eight by ten yards — and of the huts in which the prisoners slept.

"You are probably aware," said my informant, "that wood under water remains in excellent condition for centuries, unless exposed to the ravages of the *teredo navalis;* take, for example, the preservation of the wooden piles of the bridge built by Cæsar over the Rhine. Our wood, of course, requires long drying. We keep one very low fire burning, and light others only to cook the food. If the fire goes out, we can ignite the dried wood by friction. On occasion when the wood has proved too damp, we have made a fire of dried fish and the stalks of fibrous weeds."

"But are you not in danger of exhausting your fish supply?" I asked.

"We have never seen a sign of any such calamity. Whether these waters are connected with the 'fishy' Bosphorus, in which there are seventy edible varieties, we do not know; but they are proportionately 'fishy.' Sometimes the fish that have sight are attracted by the reflection from torches in the boats, and killed with stone spears of our own manufacture; but both blind and seeing varieties are usually caught in nets made from the fibrous weeds. The old people declare the aqueduct measures several miles; but we are forbidden to pass a great shoal, which, with the

dense mass of weeds on it, would dam up the water if a passage on each side were not kept clear. The prisoners, from time to time, have worked at digging away the sand and cutting the weeds; but a sign is set up at a certain spot, beyond which they dare not go unless they seek death. One of our number ventured, believing that he might find the secret of the entrance; but he paid for his rashness with his life. Just beyond the shoal, concealed by the water, but stretching from wall to wall, a trap is set; and the aged men here tell ghastly tales of some who have been caught in it. They believe that our captors, who visit us from time to time, have a passage under the superstructure, through which they come in a submarine boat, not far from the trap, the mechanism of which of course they understand If that be true, we shall never find the passage." He paused, as if listening, then continued lightly, and in English, "But about the fish; if they furnish brain food, we should be a most intellectual community. But perhaps, as our friend Mark Twain observed, a couple of whales would be necessary to produce an effect."

Though his Greek was not that of a native, it had not occurred to me that he was English or American. He was thin to emaciation. His tattered clothing hung loosely; his long hair floated on his shoulders; his iron-gray beard, too, was of great length.

He answered my inquiring look, "It's a case of the ruling passion strong in death. I used to make jokes for — we'll say *Punch*. Perhaps they were sometimes heavy, but I can do better now since I've grown light-headed. Korapha and the powers that be regard me as dangerous, but spare my life because I amuse them. By the way, countrymen as we are, we must not often be seen in company, and I hear a boat approaching, so more anon."

Before I retired to the corner of the stone hut to which Chefik, a Turk, assigned me, I discovered that the affairs of the community had a certain routine. Time was measured by a rough mechanism of wood and sand, similar to an hour-glass, and a sort of calendar and record of such events as the "disappearance" of a prisoner was scratched on a stone. Axes, rough spears, and knives had been manufactured with great patience from stone, and vessels of stone, wood, and shells had been carved by the aid of these primitive implements.

I was watched so closely by Korapha and his Turks that two days passed before I found an opportunity for conversation with the English-speaking prisoner. I then informed him that I was Richard Harden, of the *Spectator*, and of the probable cause of my imprisonment. In turn he told me that he was the late Somerton Symes, of the Boston *Tattler*, that he had been dead three years, and that, so far as he knew, his widow and orphan son were still living in Brookline. His voice choked when he spoke of them. He drew his hand across his eyes, and was silent for some moments. When he had recovered his composure, he inquired if I was a married man.

I answered that no woman had been rash enough to accept me, and he warned me that I must carefully suppress any appearance of interest in Eirene Cynides; otherwise, I should bring trouble to her, and probably death to myself. Korapha had announced his intention of making her his wife, and though Symes did not believe that, being a prisoner, he would be permitted to marry, yet if he were induced by jealousy or annoyance to make false accusations against any one, his misrepresentations would influence the powers above. Korapha, so far as his fellow-captives were concerned, held the keys of death, but was not permitted to turn them in the lock; that amusement being reserved for the captors, who were much diverted by the terror their visits aroused, and by their game of casting lots for the next victim. If Korapha should fail in his duties, or otherwise displease, the death lot might fall on him, but at present he was too valuable, and he was granted many privileges which were withheld from his assistants. Symes believed that he was a disgraced member of the secret association, and had been a man of much power.

It was evident, in the days that followed, that Korapha felt malicious delight in making opportunities for me to see how the unhappy Eirene was compelled to endure his company. The fact that she hated, feared, and tried to escape him gave him such pleasure as a big bully finds in torturing some helpless little lad. My love for her seemed to feed and grow on its hopelessness, and between horror at the prospect of years in that grim abode, and dread that she would be torn from us and carried away, I was almost distraught. For Symes had observed the admiration of our

captors for her beauty, and believed that very soon, probably on their next visit, she would be taken from her father and friends, and forced to become the unwilling bride of one who had appeared especially interested in her.

The keeper's abode was a stone house, about a quarter of a mile from the prisoners' island. It rose straight out of the water, and was large enough to contain several rooms. The oldest captives believed that it had been built soon after the completion of the aqueduct. Two of the Turkish assistants slept on an anchored raft outside it, and the other three on our island. It was said that none of them had ever been admitted to the interior of the house. Korapha doubtless had abundant stores of provisions there; he and his men were well nourished, and in far better fighting condition than their fellow-prisoners.

One day I remarked to Symes, "Kalitri thinks that there is not only a submarine boat passage beyond the shoal, but a tunnel from under the house to a place outside the wall. Yet, even if he is right, what chance have we of entering the building, locked, barred, and guarded as it always is?"

"A poor chance, indeed," replied Symes. "I believe I can trust your discretion," he continued, after a pause in which he appeared to be in deep thought. "I have mentioned my opinion to Basileios Cynides only, and I will ask you not to give a hint to any one of what I tell you. I am convinced that there is a tunnel, but that it does not lead beyond the wall. If there had not been another way, the house might have been built against the wall, with a very short tunnel under, or a passage through; but it is placed about the center of the aqueduct The tunnel is a short one, and leads only to the pillar on the right hand."

"The pillar! But how —"

"That pillar is hollow. I have tested it frequently, and am sure of it. You have observed, no doubt, that ten pillars which support the roof in that part of the aqueduct are hexagonal, and of unusually large size, fully six feet in diameter. Nine are solid; the walls of the tenth are not, I believe, more than twelve inches thick. If I am correct, there must be ample room inside for the ascent of one person at a time. I have not dared to carry a light to examine it; but from such observations as I have been able to

make when I have been alone in the neighborhood, I believe that one pillar was built of brick, flushed with mortar, and dressed to resemble stone."

The sound of an approaching boat, which might be Korapha's, put a sudden stop to our conference; but on other occasions I learned further particulars.

I had been a prisoner for many weeks, when one day, as I was making a pretense of fishing, at some distance from the island, Eirene joined me, and told me, with much agitation, that Korapha had gone away to be absent until the next day; and she had promised, under threat of torture and death to her father, to marry him directly after his return. Alas! I feared not Korapha, but those whose visit had long been dreaded, and who would come back with him. I believed that he had extorted her promise only because it pleased him to torture her, and he knew his time for that had almost ended. I tried to think of some way of escape, to give her some hope; and then, overcome by my sympathy, agonized by fears, I told her of my love, called her endearing names, and strove to comfort her.

A low chuckle startled us. Silently and stealthily Korapha had come, for he was close beside us. I saw the glint of steel, and believed that he meant to bury the knife in my body. With the courage of desperation I sprang at his throat, and throttled him so that, dizzy and breathless, he could not strike true, though I felt the point of his blade. The knife dropped from his limp hand, and Eirene seized it. His condition was poor, and I choked him into temporary unconsciousness. I told my companion that she must act promptly under my direction, for failure would mean death to her, to me, and to all whom she loved; and, though she trembled with horror, she obeyed. While she searched the boat, I gagged Korapha; then, after removing his cloak, with Eirene's assistance, I bound him hand and foot with part of a long coil of rope she had found. On his person I discovered a revolver, another knife, and a phial of some liquid. Then I removed his oars to my boat, towed his to a small shoal and stuck it fast in the sand. He had begun to move, but had not recovered his senses when we rowed rapidly away toward the place where I had left Symes. I hastily told him of the encounter.

He cautiously tested the liquid, and said that it was a powerful narcotic, which might be of great service. The time for action, for fighting a desperate game, had arrived, and no one must shirk it. He said he would go alone to the island, to avoid exciting suspicion; I must follow in a few minutes, and Eirene must row slowly in the direction of Korapha's house, and await us in the neighborhood of a mark at the old partition wall, not far beyond our island.

On my arrival, Kalitri informed me that Symes, with Markos and Georgios, had surprised two of the Turkish guards in their hut. Symes had stupefied them with the liquid I had given him; his companions had gagged and bound them, and they were now searching the hut; while others, obeying Symes's hurried directions, were keeping guard, and putting in the boats such rough weapons as they had manufactured.

I met Symes at the hut door. He had found in a hole, concealed by a part of the flooring, some rope, knives, and two files. "I was sure," he said, "that Chefik's hand had been hurt by a file. I dressed it for him yesterday, and kept my opinion to myself. I am in hopes that he has done us a very good turn."

When the young men came out with their spoils we rolled a great stone against the door, and left the guards helpless behind it.

Symes told the old priest, Melapoulos, what we meant to try, and that, were it possible, we would take him with us. He answered, with pious resignation, that he knew it could not be, that he was prepared for any fate, and would gladly remain, in the hope that he might soothe and sustain those who, by reason of their infirmities, could not attempt the escape.

Spite of the denials of Chefik and Seyfullah, who had been threatened with torture unless they would reveal the secret of the exit, it was possible that the remaining guards had an access to the house, and means of giving the alarm. The old people, who were hardly able to distinguish their imagining from reality, had warned us how, on two occasions when prisoners had risen against their keepers, the outcry had caused sudden flashings of piercing lights from a hundred openings in the roof, and the speedy arrival of avengers. We could not be sure that there was no foundation for these stories, and therefore agreed to advance in couples, in a

leisurely way, keeping the torches in our boats carefully covered; for even I could now distinguish objects through the darkness at a short distance. Symes, who was familiar with the drug, and had saturated cloths with a quantity sufficient to stupefy, went before us with Kalitri, while Basileios and I found Eirene. When we came up with the leading pair, the guard, Hamed, whom they had overtaken, was lying unconscious in his boat, and we remained to complete the work with him, while Symes and his companion went on to the house. When we arrived there, we found that the struggle with the couple who had been half asleep on the raft had been short; but they had suspected danger, and shouted for help before they lost consciousness. We were uneasy lest their cries had been heard, but would not draw back now.

The windows were high, but the bars of all were quickly examined by three men hoisted on the shoulders of their companions. Symes's surmise was correct. The guards had filed the bars of a rear window, the one nearest the water, so that they soon yielded to force. With hearts almost stilled with dread, we watched Symes fasten a rope to a strong side bar, preparatory to letting himself down. Would he be seized by some trap, or pierced by the spear of some hidden watcher? No; presently he called softly, "Come on, I'm all right"; and, one by one, we followed, hauling up the eighth, who had no companion's shoulders on which to mount, by a rope.

We held this last man up by the window, while he replaced the bars and fastened an inside iron shutter, which we had found open. We soon had reason to be thankful that we had done so, for the muffled sounds that reached our sensitive ears told of an advancing force.

"Quick!" cried Basileios. "Unless we can hide, we are lost!"

Swiftly we cast our eyes about, and, in a corner, half concealed by old rugs, I saw a trap door. It covered a hole, barely large enough to hold us all. But, believing it was our only chance, we dropped down one by one into the darkness. Georgios, the last to enter, contrived to draw the rugs over the trap before he closed the door. Almost stifled, and tortured by fears as we were, the time that passed before the searchers tramped over our heads and

went out of the house, fastening the door behind them, seemed interminable. We had towed the raft of the outer guards far away, and had sunk our own boats; so our hope was that the newcomers, not suspecting danger near the house, would go directly to the island; for it was probable that they had access to hidden boats of whose existence we had not been aware or that they had brought with them, packed in small compass, some kind of portable floating contrivance.

They might return fatally soon; yet we chose rather to face instant death at their hands than remain longer in that foul, stifling cavern. When we had left it, we secured the strong bolts and bars on the inside of the door; then two searched for the tunnel, and the others threw off outer garments, cast them in the hole, and put on clothing taken from the guards or found in the house. Eirene tucked her hair beneath a cap, and hid her dress by a long cloak. When Basileios and Symes summoned us, we followed them without delay through a trap door, down a steep flight of steps, and along a narrow passage; then, one behind another, we ascended a rusty iron ladder that ran up one side of the hollow pillar; and, though death might await us at the end, not one thought of hesitating.

I was the third in line; and when I followed my leaders over a curving stairway on the arch, I became aware by the sound, and the light that shown from above, that a door had been opened without resistance. Basileios, the foremost, turned and said softly, "Give the word to those behind, follow quickly, silently, there is no one here!"

Presently we found ourselves in a small room, that had lights turned low; but through high, narrow windows, mere slits in the wall, a strange glare came in. Judging from the hour marked by our timepiece when we left the island, it was now after ten o'clock, and we had hoped to be aided by the darkness, should we succeed in escaping from the prison. It seemed evident, however, that there was some brilliant illumination that would make detection easy; yet we were nervously impatient to go on.

When we found the heavy door unfastened, and stepped into an empty corridor, we were fearful that our arrival had been anticipated, and a trap set for us. But we closed the door, as we had

closed that at the end of the ladder. Symes, Kalitri, and Gulbenkian walked abreast; Eirene, guarded by her father and me, followed, and directly behind were Markos and Georgios. Even Eirene was armed with a dagger, taken from one of the guards, and four of us had revolvers as well as knives. The command of Basileios was that we must not take life unless it should be unavoidable in self-defense.

The dimly lighted halls were bright enough to our eyes, so long accustomed to profound darkness. As we went on, we expected every moment that some foe in ambush would spring upon us, and our nervous tension was increased by the dread that, after so many dangers passed, so many difficulties surmounted, when sweet freedom was so near, all chance of escape might in one instant be cut off. What wonder that we trembled and turned cold when we heard advancing footsteps, and four men came around a corner?

"Keep close together. March in order steadily," commanded Basileios. And with firm tread, despite our tremors, we approached the enemy. But, to our astonishment, without lifting a hand against us, the four turned and fled.

In obedience to order, we followed quickly, without breaking rank. Presently we heard the tramp of many feet, and knew that a force was advancing against us.

I have but a confused recollection of the succeeding events; of our wild rush past trembling men, whose hands seemed powerless to attack; of others who met us more boldly; of flashing steel and whizzing shot; of a stinging pain in my shoulder, and a struggle to free myself from a strong grasp; and of finding ourselves wounded, almost spent and breathless, but with the courage of desperation, in a large garden with many trees.

There we discovered the cause of the glare through the windows, and why guards had forsaken their posts, or had been called elsewhere, for we saw the sky reddened by fire and heard cries of the assassination of Selmet Pasha, and the work of incendiaries. The dead man had been a leader in the association that had condemned us. But louder than the shouts beyond the walls were the calls within them for our capture, and yet we were outside the gates at last, mingling with the crowds that hurried toward the conflagration.

After a time, in response to a sign passed from one to another, we slipped down a narrow, deserted street, and followed Kalitri. At his request, we concealed ourselves near a large building, while he knocked at a barred door. The watchman who answered almost fled in terror, but our companion held him, made some rapid explanations, and the faithful servant's dread and incredulity gave place to delight, for this was the warehouse of the merchant Olantes, a cousin of Kalitri, who had been mourned as one dead.

When we were under shelter and in comparative security, we learned that our three leaders in the prison halls, perceiving that the superstitious fellows who met us regarded us as unearthly visitants, had made hideous grimaces and gesticulations to heighten the effect. Many in the crowd, too, had drawn away, shuddering at our ghastly faces and wild appearance.

Olantes, who came to us in the morning, kept us in hiding all day, and through a part of the following night But before dawn we were conveyed, secreted under bales, to the hold of a merchantman, from which, miles from the city of our imprisonment, we were transferred to an American vessel.

Then, on sparkling Mediterranean waters, under sunny skies, safe, free, and full of hope, I renewed the wooing I had begun beneath the earth, in darkness, and almost in despair.

The Yellow Umbrella.

BY JAMES BUCKHAM.

THE story which I am about to tell will not be believed, because, I suppose, nothing like it has ever happened before, not because it is inherently impossible or improbable. You shall hear my story, however, and believe it or not, as you please.

I had been on a sketching tour through some of the most remote regions of the Canadian wilderness; and on the 14th of July, 1881, in company with my French Canadian guide, Prosper Tranquil, I beached my canoe above the famous rapid and falls of Les Grandes Piles, on the St. Maurice River, and prepared to go into camp for the night.

As there still remained an hour or more of daylight, I took my easel to a point some short distance above the camp, and began sketching the beautiful river, with the hills beyond, while my guide built a temporary shelter and kindled our evening fire.

Suddenly I heard a loud hail from the water, and saw a canoeist approaching our camp. From his garb and general appearance I perceived that he was an artist, like myself.

"I am out to see if I can catch a salmon for supper," cried the canoeist, addressing my guide. Perhaps you can tell me where I shall be most likely to get a rise?"

"Better go up stream long ways for fush," shouted Prosper, who was standing, axe in hand, watching the canoeist rather anxiously. "Current strong as bull moose. You git leetle way furder down, you go over falls, sure!"

The stranger nodded his thanks, and with several sharp strokes of the paddle turned his rapidly drifting canoe up stream. I watched him from time to time, as he made his way up the river, and finally fell to casting his flies half a mile above me. Then I became so engrossed in my work that I quite forgot the incident

until something drifted across my field of vision as I sketched. It was the man in the canoe. He had hooked a gamy salmon, and was fighting a battle royal with the big fish. So excited and engrossed was he that he never raised his eyes to the shore at all, but kept them fixed steadily on the water, where the taut line cut zigzag through it.

I fixed my attention upon my sketch again, but only for a few moments. A growing sense of uneasiness caused me to look up. The man was still drifting, still fighting his salmon. With his eyes fixed upon the river's surface, the canoe, naturally, seemed to him comparatively stationary. He little realized the speed at which he was being carried down stream.

Alternately watching, and working with nervous uncertainty at my sketch, I saw the fisherman approach the danger line, just below our camp. Finally he reached it, kneeling down in the canoe, with his landing net extended toward the now thoroughly exhausted salmon.

"Look out, there! Better let fush go and 'tend to paddle!"

I saw Prosper come out of the woods and run excitedly down to the rocky shore, yelling, and waving his arms. The stranger looked up in startled surprise, and, seeing where he was, dropped tackle and rod overboard, grabbed up his paddle, and began to fight the current manfully.

An icy shudder ran over me, as I noted the almost imperceptible progress the light canoe was making against the current, and heard the ominous roar of the cataract, less than a quarter of a mile below. For a few moments so sure was I the man would be swept over the falls that I turned away my face. I had not the moral courage to watch his terrible fate. Then I looked again. The stranger, on both knees, was straining mightily against the rushing flood. He was a good paddler, and even then all might have gone well — for he was gaining against the river by inches — had not the madness of terror induced the man to plant the blade of his paddle against a submerged rock, which it grazed in passing, and give a mighty shove. The convulsive movement snapped the paddle in twain! The blade popped to the surface and went whirling down stream, with the canoe alongside it.

For a fatal moment the man in the canoe seemed paralyzed with

horror. Then he sprawled forward and caught up the reserve paddle, without which no experienced canoeist trusts himself upon swift water. But by the time he had straightened up and plunged the fresh paddle into the torrent, it was evident that he had passed the point where human sinews could hold their own against the furious flood. Though he paddled with a perfect frenzy, I could see the canoe yielding, inch by inch, and foot by foot, to the mad pressure of the water. I heard the man scream in his terror, as he fought, bleeding at the mouth, where, in the agony of his fierce effort, he had bit tongue and lips.

Prosper and I involuntarily made a dash for our canoe. Then we stopped, and looked each other in the face. It was all so utterly hopeless and pitiful! The river monster had the man in his jaws, and there was no escape for him. Prosper turned and ran down the rocky bank toward the falls, and I, after hesitating for a few moments in the weakness of dread, followed him.

Until swept within some sixty yards of the fearful brink, the man continued to ply his paddle furiously. Then a sudden calmness of despair seemed to succeed his frenzy. He laid the dripping blade carefully on the bottom of the canoe — as carefully as if he thought he would need it again in the happy hunting ground beyond that roaring gulf — and rising upon his toes as he knelt, whirled in the canoe to face his fate.

For an instant he clung thus, with his hands grasping the sides of the canoe. Then, with wondering astonishment, I saw him reach quickly forward and catch up something that lay in the stern of the canoe. For a moment I could not make out what it was. Then I perceived that it was one of those big, yellow sun-umbrellas that every artist carries to protect himself against the sun while at work in exposed places. The umbrella had evidently been lying in the bottom of the canoe when the artist unpacked his duffle, and had been allowed to remain, as of too slight importance to remove.

Drowning men catch at straws. Men about to be hurled over the brink of a cataract catch at anything that fate vouchsafes them. Evidently, on sight of the yellow umbrella lying at his feet, a desperate scheme had suggested itself to the canoeist.

Quickly — for but an instant of time remained for action — he

flung open the umbrella and rose to his feet. Then, as the canoe quivered and poised upon the rounding edge of the cataract — to which it had seemed to shoot up out of a watery depression — he gathered himself together and made a wild outward and forward leap, holding the strong umbrella spread above him. Aided by the impetus of the canoe, he cleared the great, mist-wreathed wall of water, and fell far beyond it. Even as he leaped, I saw one of his hands go convulsively up to the ribs of the umbrella, as if to grasp them, and so prevent the umbrella from turning inside out in the upward rush of air.

Almost at the same instant that the stranger leaped from the brink of the cataract, Prosper and I reached the edge of the precipice on shore, and gazed down into the awful gulf.

We saw the man going down through the mist like a meteor. Instead of whirling over and over in the air, and dropping like a stone to his certain fate, as would have been the case were he wholly unsustained, the big, strong-ribbed umbrella kept him upright, and, acting as a parachute, visibly lessened the velocity of his descent. We saw him strike the raging, boiling, yeasty water, feet foremost. He went under, of course, like lead; but when the big umbrella touched the surface of the water, it buoyed him up, so that he sank no deeper than the length of its handle.

The yellow umbrella, with its clinging human freight, was carried along at frightful speed for some sixty feet. Then the man, apparently, was dashed against some submerged rock, and the umbrella torn from his hands; for the latter went bobbing away, upside down, in the boiling rapids.

"Come on!" cried Prosper, letting himself down into a cleft in the rocks, through which a difficult path led to the bottom of the cliff. We scrambled down, as fast as we could without danger to our necks, and were soon at the level of the rapids below.

About a hundred rods down stream lay shimmering a narrow strip of sand beach, that marked the terminus of the rapids below the falls. As we neared this beach, in panting haste, we saw some dark object stretched out on the white sand. It was the form of the man in the canoe — the man who had leaped over the falls. As I stumbled to his side, my heart beat as if it would suffocate me. Was he alive? Could it be that he had sur-

vived the strange and terrible experience through which he had passed?

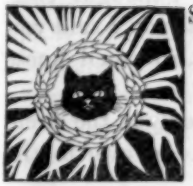
We drew the inert body to a half-submerged log, and rolled it to and fro, till the water ran from the man's lungs. Then, stripping the body to the waist, we used every means of resuscitation known to the woodsman. At length the man's eyelids began to quiver slightly; he gave a gasping breath or two, and commenced to writhe in the physical agony that accompanies restoration to life after the vital spark has almost flickered out. But as, beneath our vigorous chafing, the blood began to circulate freely in its wonted channels again, the man's pain abated, and presently he opened his eyes and attempted to sit up. In less than an hour he was able to talk with us.

Oddly enough, the yellow umbrella was cast ashore only a short distance from where its owner landed, and Prosper found it and brought it to us, as we sat discussing the adventure. The umbrella was pretty badly torn; one or two ribs were hanging loose, and the handle was broken. But it was far from being the total wreck I expected to see. "It's lucky," said the stranger, "that you and your guide were permitted to be eye-witnesses of this strange adventure of mine, for otherwise, although I might show the umbrella as evidence, no one would believe my story." He paused for a moment, looked thoughtfully at the tattered umbrella, and then laughingly asked: "How did I look, anyway, going down over the falls?"

Before I could reply, Prosper broke forth excitedly: "Oh, bah gosh! Ah'll t'ought de moon was break loose an' fall down into a well five t'ousand feet deep. Sacre! Ah'll nev' see anyt'ing lak dat before, me. Ah'll got me dat same kind of sun-umbrel' poot soon rat off, M'sieu! Mebbe dose falls don't scare me some more, hein?"

Branded in the Valley.

BY MARTHA PIERCE.



AS the day died, three horsemen rode down from the mountain and struck into the trail that leads across the mesa. Once clear of the descent, the horses broke into the long, swinging gallop which the cowboy loves. The fine gray alkali dust flew backward from the flying feet in little clouds which looked in the half light like puffs of smoke. They rode in silence, save once when the leader half turned in his saddle and spoke to the rider nearest him.

"How far is it, Jim?"

Jim lifted his bridle-reins, and his horse sprang alongside the big gray of the leader.

"'Bout thirty miles yet," he said briefly; "we'll make it by nine o'clock."

Silence fell again and nothing was heard on the wide, desolate plain, as the darkness deepened, but the muffled thud of the horses' feet on the soft soil, and now and then, faint and far off, the long-drawn, dismal howl of a coyote.

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The moon climbed up over a high bluff and looked down upon a little valley where a small, swift stream ran through green meadows. Beyond, the barren hills stood, bleak and gaunt, against the sky, terrible in their unutterable loneliness. In the midst of the valley one tree stood like a sentinel near a low log house set a stone's throw from the brink of the stream.

A fire that leaped upon the hearth and flung its ruddy light through the small windows served to light the rude interior, its uncertain gleams half revealing, half concealing the rough uncouthness of a man who sat before the fireplace holding a child upon his knee. She was not a beautiful child to him, if you except the long, light curls which hung like a misty cloud about her

small, round face. The father twisted one long curl about his horny finger as they talked.

"Now tell me," he was saying, "why you didn't go home with Mrs. Potter to-day, when she rode all the way over here on purpose. I met her out beyond Four Mile, and she told me she was comin' over to get you to come home with her and visit for a spell, till I could get time to look round a little. I thought 'twas real kind and good of her, and I told her to tell you I said you could go. I give her my jack-knife to show you, so you'd know she'd seen me. Didn't she tell you?"

"Yes," said the child, snuggling down contentedly in the circle of his arm, "she told me, but I didn't want to go over to the Bar H. to live."

"But," he began argumentatively, "Mrs. Potter's right about it bein' too lonesome for you to stay here when I'm out in the hills. It is mighty lonesome for a little girl like you. You better let me take you over to-morrow." She shook her head until her misty hair flew out like an oriole.

"Who'd keep house for you?" she asked, as if that question settled the whole matter.

He laughed weakly. "You do take pretty good care of your dad, don't you? And you're all the housekeeper he's had for a good spell now."

"Since ma went to heaven," said the child gravely.

He started and looked at her curiously.

"Who told you that?" he said, almost roughly.

"Told me what?"

She was looking at the fire intently, and had a half-absorbed expression. "That ma went to heaven? Oh, she told me herself, before she went, and she made me promise I'd come, too. She told me all about the angels and God and everything. She said the angels was all around, every place, and since she died I know it's true, 'cause I've seen 'em. There's one right there in the fire now. I've been seeing it ever so long. A little baby angel with its wings spread out to fly. See, pa? Right there, in the middle of the brightest — see?"

"No," said the man slowly, "I can't quite make it out." Suddenly he started.

"What's that?"

"Nothin' but a coyote," derisively. "You ain't afraid of a coyote?"

"No," he said, putting her down from his knee, "I ain't, but I thought I heard something else, a horse snortin', maybe."

He opened the door and looked out. Three men on horseback confronted him. He was covered instantly.

"We're onto you," said one laconically, "say your prayers."

He grew pale beneath the bronze, but he faced them resolutely, and stood a trifle straighter.

"What does this mean, men?" he said. "What have I done?"

The leader laughed grimly.

"When a man's too handy with his brandin' irons he's apt to run up against trouble some day. You've got about two minutes to make your last will and testament."

His troubled eye moved from one to another of his menacing foes, seeking in vain for the pity he never would have asked for himself. The child had crept to his side, and looked wonderingly and with terror upon the three strangers.

At last, after a minute as long as years, he spoke stumblingly, as if words of entreaty came hardly to his lips.

"You have homes, men, and little ones, maybe. Think of the child, and have mercy." He caught her up suddenly and held her before them.

Startled by the sudden movement, the big gray reared and pawed the air. There was a sharp report and a shrill scream through the stillness of the valley; then the father stood looking stupidly at the limp and senseless thing he held in his arms, and the swift red stream that dyed his shirt sleeve.

The big gray had bolted, and after a moment of horrified waiting the two who were left wheeled their horses and rode away through the night, with the child's scream ever pursuing them, leaving the outcast alone with his dead.

. . . . . .

The sun climbed up over the high bluff and looked down on the green valley where the one tree stood by the low log house. Under the tree a man was stooping over a little mound by the